



January 2015



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

jross@westfordma.gov
www.westfordma.gov/tm
978-692-5500

Subscribe to Town News



Receive Important Town
Notices and Information
[www.westfordma.gov/
subscriber](http://www.westfordma.gov/subscriber)

Trash Barrel Limit
Change for
Curbside Pickup
Page 6

Deadline to Submit
Petition Articles for
Inclusion on the Annual
Town Meeting Warrants
is Tuesday, January 27th
Page 9

Nutrition for Peak
Performance On The
Field And In The
Classroom
Page 10



Watch
Meetings Online
westford CAT
community access television
www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

The Permanent Town Building Committee is hosting a public meeting on Wednesday January 21st at 7pm in the Police Department Training Room, where they will be presenting their recommendations for our new fire station, along with ideas for relocating our IT department and combining dispatch. An agenda is available at this link: [Fire Station Public Meeting](#).

I am pleased to announce that Standard & Poor's has reassigned Westford with a AAA/Stable bond rating for the towns recent \$6.1 million general obligation bonds. Standard & Poor's noted the following factors as the main drivers of our AAA bond rating:

- Very strong economy, which benefits from its access to the Boston metropolitan statistical area;
- Very strong budgetary flexibility, with 2014 available reserves in excess of 15% of general fund expenditures;
- Strong budgetary performance, with a stable and consistent revenue profile;
- Very strong liquidity, providing very strong cash levels to cover both debt service and expenditures;
- Strong management environment and good financial management policies and practices that are embedded and sustainable;
- Very strong debt and contingent liabilities, driven by low debt as a percent of market value and an aggressive amortization schedule;
- Strong institutional framework.

We were very pleased with this rating and our excellent review resulted in a True Interest Cost (TIC) of 1.534% on these bonds. We also refinanced our Highway Garage saving our tax payers \$548,000 over the remaining 10 years of the loan.

The Westford Remembers Memorial Fund has been hard at work in recent months. The Memorial Fund has helped to place over 20 Historic Markers on historic homes and buildings. There are five different town "Seals" for the signs. They depict historic town-owned buildings; Old Town Hall (the official seal), Town Hall's newer cupola, Westford Museum, Roudenbush, and the Fletcher Library. I would like to thank Patti Mason, Nancy Cook, Ellen Harde and the Memorial Fund for donating many of the signs and Firefighter David Christiana, with help from Firefighter Joseph Delpapa and Fire Lieutenant Paul Lemieux, for installing most of the signs.



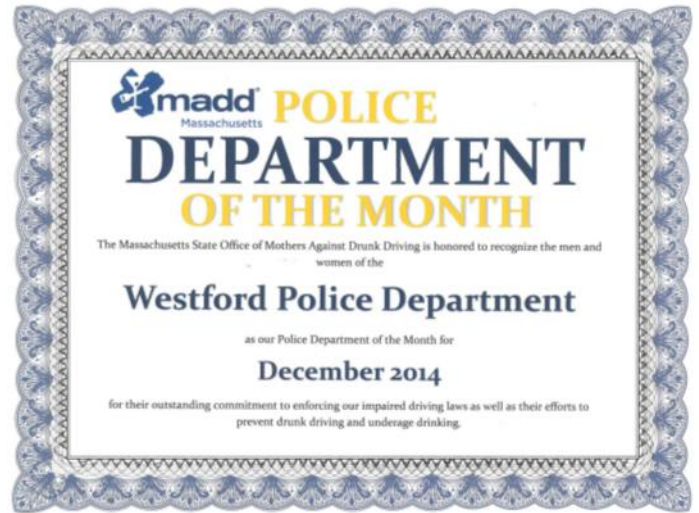
(continued on next page)

The Memorial Fund is also working with the Town IT Department to develop a Memorial Information and Maintenance Database from existing ones the town has. This database will have all information known about each memorial, including photos, locations, historical information, dates of install, and materials used.

Firefighter Christiana also presented a plan to the Selectmen for a new monument of Westford Minutemen Capt. Jonathan Minot and his son Jonathan Jr., a drummer for the Westford Minutemen. The Statue will be about 9' tall, on a granite base of 7' to 8' tall and will overlook the Minot's Corner intersection, far enough away to avoid any line of sight issues. All of these projects are being paid for through private donations.

I am delighted to report that our Westford Police Department received the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) award for the *Police Department of the Month* for December 2014. This recognition is in large part due to the department's efforts in Operating under the Influence "OUI" enforcement. Both Police Chief Thomas McEnaney and Captain Mark Chambers were present to receive the award.

Our Police Department also received the *2015 Gold Award* from AAA in recognition of their outstanding achievements in traffic safety, and their continuing efforts to educate and protect the citizens of our community. In addition, AAA recognized Officer Christopher Musick, naming him as their "Traffic Safety Hero" for his efforts in traffic enforcement and safety.



Congratulations to our Westford Police Department for achieving these distinguished recognitions.

Two dedicated and outstanding public safety personnel have retired after many decades of service to our town. The Selectmen and I recognized Hervey Cote, Police Lieutenant, for his 35 years of service to our town and Firefighter Billy Stone for his 42 years of service to our town. Their service is truly appreciated, we wish them the best of luck in their retirements, and they will be missed in their respective departments.

At their December 9th, 2014 meeting, the Selectmen voted unanimously to institute a three barrel limit for trash pickup. This is a reduction from the current 5 barrel limit. Barrel capacity will remain at 50 gallons or 50 pounds of weight or suitable plastic bags of sufficient wall strength to contain 40 pounds without failing. The Selectmen also agreed to recommend that residents purchase 32 gallon barrels instead of 50 gallon barrels when the need for a replacement arises. Lastly, the Selectmen agreed to reduce the price of Bulk Item stickers from \$10 to \$5. The Recycling Commission is undertaking a public outreach and media campaign to inform residents of these changes. More details are available on the Recycling Commission webpage and at the following link: [Trash/Recycling Information](#).

The Selectmen recently approved a new Ambulance Billing Policy which can be viewed here: [Ambulance Billing](#). This policy outlines the bill collection process as it relates to patient reimbursement, insurance deductibles, outstanding charges and other aspects of the billing process.

(continued on next page)

Some residents and business owners can expect contact by National Grid in the upcoming months. National Grid will be undertaking a Gas Regulator Replacement Program during the spring/summer of 2015. Gas regulators ensure that gas is delivered to homes and small businesses at the appropriate pressure. National Grid will be surveying our meters and then arranging a time with homeowners in need of a replacement meter. Their contractor, Premier, will address any questions or concerns you may have about this project. They can be reached at 1-844-344-0101. The National Grid program flyer and maps can be viewed here: [Gas Regulator Replacement Program](#)

If you are interested in the commercial and industrial development projects that have been completed in the past four years, you can access a project summary on the Town Managers webpage or by accessing the following link: [Commerical, Industrial or Institutional Projects 2010 through 2014](#). Some notable projects include the 238,410 sq. ft. mixed use commercial/retail shopping center at Cornerstone Square and the 100,000 sq. ft. expansion of Class A office space for Red Hat, at a projected cost of \$50 million.

We have also published a summary of major residential projects that have been completed or are under development during the past four years. These projects can be accessed here: [Westford Residential Projects 2010 through 2014](#). Some notable projects include the 200 unit mixed income Princeton Properties apartment homes, redevelopment of Laughton Farms Nursery into 26 single family homes with 25 acres of open space and conservation restricted land, and the Summer Village seasonal residential community (April to October) of 276 cottage sized condominiums.

Westford Scout Troop 159 welcomed two new Eagle Scouts this month; Andrew James Clina and Ian Wolfe Macbeth. Thanks to both young men for their dedication to scouting and to community service. The Selectmen presented certificates to the Eagle Scouts at their Eagle Court of Honor ceremonies, and I had the pleasure of presenting letters of appreciation to Andrew James Clina and Ian Wolfe Macbeth at their meeting on January 13th.

Would you like more detailed information on Board of Selectmen meetings?


Click here to access: [Board of Selectmen Documents](#)

Click here to access: [Board of Selectmen Meeting Videos](#)

I would like to remind the community about upcoming deadlines for the Annual Town Meeting, March 28, 2015. Petition articles are due to the Town Clerk's Office for certification of signatures by 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 27th, 2014. Here is a link: [Town Meeting Documents](#)

The Board of Selectmen is looking for multiple members to join the newly established [Town Center Parking and Traffic Study Committee](#). There are several openings on other local boards and committees, including the Bylaw Review, Communications Advisory, Cultural Council, Historical Commission, Public Works Initiative Committee, and others, and I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees. If you have interest, please complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#) or stop by and fill out a form in the Town Manager's office.

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross
Town Manager

J.V. Fletcher Library

CHECK OUT "THE GREAT COURSES"

Most of us remember a time when the discovery and thrill of learning were forces in our lives. Now, without the limitations of classrooms or the stress of exams, patrons interested in lifelong learning have the opportunity to take a class via an exciting new series of Non-Fiction audiobooks. "The Great Courses" offer lectures taught by gifted professors and world class experts (who have been chosen based on: teaching awards, published evaluations, newspaper write-ups of the best teachers on campus, etc.) They are also chosen because they are good communicators and entertaining to listen to.

Our first selection of The Courses include lectures on: "Understanding Investments," "Practicing Mindfulness," "Food," "The Philosopher's Toolkit," "The Secret Life of Words," "The History of the English Language," "How to Listen and Understand Opera," "Transformational Leadership," "How Conversation Works," "Trails of Evidence: How Forensic Science Works," "The Art of Conflict Management," "Before 1776" and "The Elements of Jazz."



Whether you are learning about science or ancient history or music or Jazz, these courses aim to provide a learning experience that is academically comprehensive, engaging, insightful and sometimes even inspirational. Check them out now!



IPAD BASICS: to be taught by Technology Instructor, Rita Gavelis. Are you thinking of buying an iPad or do you have one and want to learn all of its bells and whistles? Would you like to know how to download free etitles (books and magazines), streaming videos, and audiobooks from Overdrive, Indieflix, and Zinio, the vendors that the Library subscribes to? Then this is the workshop for you! Please sign up for just one of two program offerings; on **Tuesday, Jan. 20 at 7 p.m.** or **Wednesday, Jan. 28 at 10 a.m.** Register now.

www.westfordlibrary.org

Council On Aging - Coming Events

“SENIOR TO SENIOR” – NEW INITIATIVE

We recently shared in past newsletters that we are forming a connection with the Westford Academy senior students and the senior residents of Westford. This connection started with 94 year old Genevieve being escorted to classes and eventually graduating in May. We now have set up other meaningful connections, for example: Cam is helping Angelo type up his autobiography; Lexi will be helping Jeanne load photos onto her computer, and other students will be helping seniors learn computers and others simply providing companionship.

If you have a desire to connect with a WA student please contact Annette for a match up at 978-399-2326.

CANCELLATIONS

When school is cancelled due to impassible and dangerous snow, ice, etc. then the Cameron Van will not operate and all activities at Cameron are cancelled.

Cameron will operate those days as a drop-in social warming center.

Meals on Wheels and Congregate Lunch are cancelled when Greater Lawrence Vocational School is closed. Watch Fox channel for the Greater Lawrence Vocational School closings.

CAMERON CLOSET

Sale Feb. 2nd– 13th \$1 an item; Feb. 17th—26th \$1 a bag.

Store closed Friday, Feb 27th for clothing turnover.

Accepting spring & summer clothing beginning March 2nd.

Shopping hours are Monday- Friday, 9AM -3PM.

**To view the complete
Council On Aging Newsletter
please visit our website at:**

www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on [Newsletters](#).



Recycling Commission

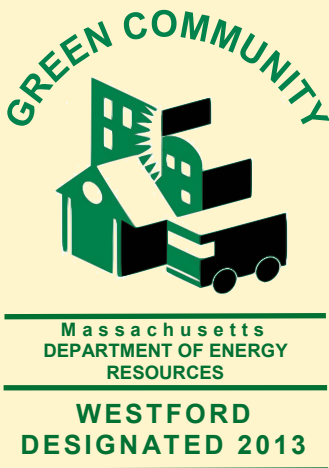
WESTFORD LOWERS TRASH BARREL LIMIT ON FEBRUARY 1st

The Recycling Commission conducted research and determined that residents are doing very well lowering trash output and diverting recyclables to their recycling bins/toters. Therefore, the Recycling Commission made three requests of the Board of Selectmen that will further reduce trash and the town's cost associated with its disposal.

At the December 9th meeting, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to support three new requests from the Recycling Commission:

- 1) Reduce the number of bags/barrels collected weekly from each household from the current 5 to 3 effective February 1, 2015; the maximum weight per barrel/bag is 50 pounds.
- 2) Recommend to residents that they buy trash containers no larger than 32 gallons when they need to replace their receptacles;
- 3) Reduce the price of bulk item stickers from \$10 to \$5 effective February 1, 2015 (bulk items include furniture, carpeting and other items too large to fit in a barrel).

More information on trash and recycling guidelines can be found on the Recycling Commission website: www.westfordma.gov/recycling.



Water Department

Preventing Frozen Pipes

This time of year damage caused by burst pipes can become a real concern, and preventing your water pipes from freezing is the ideal. That being said, frozen pipes can happen so it's a good idea to know where your main water shut off valve is for your house in the event of a burst water pipe. Show your family members how to turn it off in an emergency.

Why do pipes burst?

One of the more unusual properties of water is that it becomes less dense at temperatures less than 39 degrees F (4 degrees C), whereas most substances become denser as the temperature drops. If this phenomenon did not occur then ice would not form on the top of water bodies, and would instead sink to the bottom. Although this is excellent news for life on earth – it is not so good for water pipes. The expanding force of ice formation within the pipe can easily crack a copper or plastic water line. In addition, the increased pressure between the ice blockage and a closed faucet can exert sufficient pressure to cause a breakage.



How can you tell if the pipe is frozen?

Just because the pipe is frozen doesn't necessarily mean it will burst (although it's a good bet that it eventually will). If you see a pipe that is bulging or covered in frost the water's likely frozen inside. However, the frozen section is not always visible. If your pipes have been exposed to sub-freezing temperatures and you turn on your water and get no flow - a frozen pipe may be the culprit.

Here are some tips to prevent frozen pipes:

- Pipes most likely to freeze are the ones nearest poorly or uninsulated exterior walls, garages, crawlspaces, and basements – places where cold air can come in contact with water pipes. It's a good idea to add or supplement the insulation to these areas to prevent freezing.
- Eliminate cold drafts, fill cracks around windows or doors, check for air leaks around wiring, dryer vents and foundations and seal with insulation or caulking.
- Install pipe insulation. For newer construction it's easier and better to route water pipes so to minimize exposure to freezing temperatures, but for older houses this may not be practical. Install insulation sleeves or wrapping around your water pipes. It's important not to leave any gaps between insulation sections as any exposed pipe will be susceptible to freezing.
- Winterize your irrigation system.
- Disconnect and drain any outside garden hoses. Shut off the interior valve to any outside hose connections.
- Keep doors open to rooms where the water meter or pipes susceptible to freezing are located.
- If you have pipes running behind kitchen or storage cabinets that are located on exterior walls – open the cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around the pipes. Periodically turn on faucets located on lines that are susceptible to freezing if temperatures have been below freezing for several days. Running water can break up ice within the pipes that may have started to build up.



Water Department (continued)

What should you do if you are away for an extended period?

- If your house will be unoccupied for an extended period never shut off the heat completely (best to keep no less than 55 degrees) unless the toilets and pipes are completely drained. Also - remember to shut off your water heater first and completely drain the heating system as well.
- If your house is to be left unoccupied for the winter - and before the heat is shut off -please schedule an appointment with the Water Department so we can either remove the meter or shut off the water at the street and drain the service line. Water meters are easily damaged from freezing water.

How do you fix a frozen pipe?

If you suspect a frozen pipe, but cannot locate the problem – or if you don't feel confident fixing yourself - the easiest thing to do is to call your local plumber.

The one thing you **don't** want to do is to thaw the frozen pipe with an open flame. A handy hair dryer can do the trick without burning down your house or damaging the pipe. Slowly apply the heat, starting close to the faucet end of the pipe (make sure the faucet is open), and work slowly toward the frozen section. It goes without saying but...you never want to use electrical appliances while standing in water as the danger of electrocution is quite high.

What do I do if my pipes have burst?

Shut off the water at the main valve, which is usually located where the water line comes into the house. This is why it's a good idea to know beforehand where your main shut off valve is located – and to make sure it is easily accessible. If you can't access the main valve or are having trouble shutting it off call the Water Department at 978-692-5529 and we will shut off your water at the street. For after hour emergencies call the Westford Police Department at 978-692-2161 and the dispatcher will contact our on-call personnel for a quick response.



WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV/WATER

Town Clerk's Corner

Voter Information: Mark your calendars!



- **Annual Town Meeting: Saturday, March 28, 2015**
- **Annual Town Election: Tuesday, May 5, 2015**

If you will be 18 on or before the next election, you are a U.S. citizen and you live in Westford, you are eligible to register to vote in Westford. Haven't gotten around to registering yet? Download a [Mail-in Voter Registration Form](#), fill it out and mail it in. It's that easy!

Nomination papers for the **May 5, 2015 Town Election** are available at the Town Clerk's Office for [several offices](#). Find [2015 Candidate Information](#) if you are considering running.

The deadline to submit [petition articles](#) to the Town Clerk's Office for inclusion on the Annual Town Meeting warrant is Tuesday, **January 27, 2015 at 10:00am**. Refer to [A Guide to Town Meeting in Westford](#).

Become an Election Worker!

The Town Clerk's Office is looking for enthusiastic individuals who can work at the upcoming elections. If you are interested in this civic opportunity, please complete an [Election Officer Profile](#) and submit it to the Town Clerk's Office.

The 2015 Census will soon be appearing in your mailboxes. Please take a moment to complete and return this important document.

Dog licenses for 2015 are now available. A current rabies certificate and appropriate fee are all you need to license your dog for the calendar year. Please remember that the grace period for licensing your dog ends on **March 31st** of every year. Avoid the \$25 late fee and license your dog today. [Dog licensing details](#)



Health Department News

Nutrition For Peak Performance On The Field And In The Classroom

Joan Buchbinder, MS, RD, LDN, FADA -- team nutritionist for the Boston Celtics, and formerly the New England Patriots, and the New England Revolution – will share her expertise about how to choose the right foods for optimal performance on the playing field and in the classroom.

Wednesday, February 11, 2015 (Snow date is Thursday, February 12, 2015)
Stony Brook Middle School Auditorium
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.



**This program is co-sponsored by the
Westford
Parent Connection.**

ServSafe Food Safety Training Course

The Board of Health is happy to be once again offering a two day Serve Safe food safety training course on Wednesday March 25 and Wednesday April 1, 2015. ServSafe is nationally accredited, recognized and often required by State and Federal Food Code(s) depending on the nature and menu of a particular food event in Massachusetts. The course will be held on both nights from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Millennium School, 23 Depot Street in the All Purpose Meeting Room and will be made available for members and organizations of Westford's Community.

The cost to audit the lecture portion of the course is free for Westford residents, non-profits, members of local community organizations and food establishments; however the text books and answer exam sheets are \$70.00. Space is limited to the first 35 applicants and is open to only one applicant per organization. All book fees must be received by the Board of Health Office, located at Town Hall 55 Main Street, no later than February 27, 2015. Depending on space availability, The Board of Health Office may open the course to more than one applicant per organization. At the time of registration please provide your name, the company or organization you are associated with, address, day time & evening phone number along with a valid email address. To obtain more information please call the Westford Board of Health office at 978-692-5509.

Health Department News (continued)

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

This support group is free drop in group available to any parent who is concerned that their child might be struggling with a mental health issue. This can be something such as ADD, or some sadness, lots of worries or perhaps something more defined. This is a pro bono group offered for parents to come together and share ideas, offer support to each other and realize that they are not alone in our concern for our children. Facilitators are: Dianne Walsh, LICSW (Cognitive- Behavioral Therapist) and Sue Hanly, RN (school nurse).

Feb 10th Topic:

Positive Parenting - How to Parent without yelling, nagging, or whining (by either you or your child.) This is a group with an educational component on effective and empowering parent techniques that will change the whole atmosphere in your house.



Date: 2/10/15
Location: Millennium School (behind Abbot)
- Large All Purpose Room
Time: 7:00 pm -8:30 pm

Permanent Town Building Committee

**Fire Station Public Meeting
Wednesday, January 21st 7:00 p.m.
Police Station Training Room
53 Main Street, Westford, MA 01886**

Public is invited to attend a meeting on Wednesday, January 21st, 2015 for a presentation on the results of the Center Fire Station Study. Presentation will provide a summary of the analysis to determine the optimum location of the fire station as well as conceptual plans for the new station. All Westford residents are encouraged to attend to learn about the project and to ask any questions they may have.

Questions can be directed to:

Tom Mahanna of the Permanent Town Building Committee at tmahanna@westfordma.gov .